

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL VALLEY REGION
1685 E Street, Fresno, CA 93706

NOTICE OF PUBLIC WORKSHOP
concerning
TRIENNIAL REVIEW FOR THE
TULARE LAKE BASIN

This Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) is beginning the process of reviewing its Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Valley Region, Tulare Lake Basin (Basin Plan). This Basin Plan describes the watershed of the Tulare Lake Basin, identifies beneficial uses of surface water and groundwater, establishes water quality objectives to protect beneficial uses, and describes an implementation plan to achieve the objectives. Both State and Federal laws mandate the periodic review and update of Basin Plans. Because reviews are conducted approximately every three years, this review process is termed the "Triennial Review."

The Regional Board will hold a public workshop to receive comments on Basin Plan issues and on establishing priorities for addressing the basin planning issues that are identified in this review process. The public workshop is tentatively scheduled as follows:

Date: 13 or 14 September 2007
Time: 8:30 am
Place: City of Clovis
Council Chambers
1033 Fifth Street
Clovis, CA 93612

Regional Board staff has identified water quality issues proposed for consideration during this review. Some of these issues were identified during previous triennial review efforts, while others have been suggested more recently by interested persons or by Regional Board staff. Following is a partial list of water quality issues.

Salinity in the Lower Kings River: The Lower Kings River exceeds water quality objectives for salinity during drought periods. Additional studies are needed to adequately define the salinity problems and develop policies.

Groundwater Assessment: The Basin Plan describes a groundwater monitoring network for the Tulare Lake Basin that was never established. The groundwater monitoring network may need to be modified, but additional information is needed, including (1) the identification of existing monitoring programs, (2) identification of areas within the Tulare Lake Basin where the groundwater is adversely impacted by salts and chemicals to the extent that the groundwater no longer supports all its beneficial uses, and (3) investigations to identify potential sources of wastes, such as salts and chemicals. Modifications to the Basin Plan may include an implementation plan to collect the additional information, including coordination between water agencies and staff to collect information and modify existing groundwater monitoring network. Many of the water agencies within the Tulare Lake Basin have groundwater management plans that include monitoring programs.

Groundwater Quality Objectives for Salinity: The Basin Plan contains sub-basin water quality objectives for incremental salinity increases in groundwater. The Basin Plan objectives should be modified to clarify (1) the intent of the objectives, (2) how the objectives are to be implemented in site-specific requirements, and (3) the means of measuring compliance.

Dissolved Oxygen Objectives: The dissolved oxygen objective for Reach III of the Kings River (Pine Flat Dam to Friant-Kern) may not be achievable due to natural conditions. A study should be conducted to investigate the conditions and establish more appropriate objectives, if necessary.

Beneficial Use Designations: Where a Regional Board has evidence that a use neither exists nor likely can be feasibly attained; the Regional Board should initiate appropriate basin plan amendments to consider dedesignating the use.

Salt Management Policy: The Central Valley Water Board, in conjunction with the State Water Board and the Coastal Water Boards, should conduct an assessment of salinity levels in the valley and develop a consistent statewide policy on how salt is to be managed within the Valley and how salt disposal will be accomplished while maintaining the ground and surface water beneficial uses within the Valley and the beneficial uses in the Coastal Regions.

The public is encouraged to submit written comments by **31 August 2007** on Basin Planning issues the Regional Board should consider in this triennial review. Comments should be submitted to Anthony Toto, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region, 1685 E Street, Fresno, CA, 93706. In the comment letters, please provide sufficient background information to support adding or deleting an issue from the list and recommendation on the priority that should be given to that particular issue. At the workshop, interested parties will be given an opportunity to summarize submitted written comments or present oral comments to the Regional Water Board.

Following the workshop, staff will review oral and written comments and prepare final recommendations in a report for Regional Board consideration at a public hearing tentatively set for its regular December 2007 meeting. Staff will identify which issues are expected to be addressed in the next three years with existing resources and which require additional resources. The report will be available for comments prior to the hearing.

Questions regarding this review should be directed to Anthony Toto at (559) 445-6278 or atoto@waterboards.ca.gov. The hearing facilities will be accessible to persons with disabilities. Individuals requiring special accommodations are requested to contact Ms. Anna Carvalho at (559) 445-6543 at least 5 working days prior to the meeting. TTY users may contact the California Relay Service at 1-800-735-2929 or voice line at 1-800-735-2922.

Please bring the above information to the attention of anyone you know who would be interested in this matter.

Loren J. Harlow, Assistant Executive Officer

27 July 2007